



# EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

**Fitchburg, MA**

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

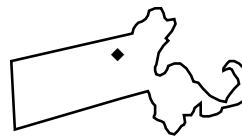
EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely clean up brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years, with additional funding provided for greenspace) to test assessment models and facilitate coordinated assessment and cleanup efforts at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels; and job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years) to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund program (each funded up to \$1,000,000 over five years) to provide financial assistance for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

## BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Fitchburg for a Brownfields Assessment Pilot. Fitchburg (population 41,194) is a densely populated mill city on the Nashua River in north-central Massachusetts. Decades of pollution from the mill industry were evident when brightly colored toxins and dyes used in the industry changed the color of the river daily. Paper mills have increasingly opted to move closer to northern pulping plants, which has taken a toll on the city's commercial sector. The closure of a General Electric facility is an example of one of the many recent blows to the city's commercial and industrial base. Household and per capita incomes in Fitchburg are well below regional and state averages, and the income of the city's Asian population, in particular, is much lower than average.

A key element of Fitchburg's Urban Renewal Plan is the construction of an urban park that reintegrates the Nashua River with the downtown. The Pilot will assist in this effort. Fitchburg will build on previous brownfields work performed under the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's Pilot (awarded in 1998).

## PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Fitchburg, Massachusetts*

**Date of Announcement:**  
April 2001

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets brownfields along the Nashua River, which is the site of a proposed urban park that reintegrates the Nashua River with the downtown.

### Contacts:

City of Fitchburg  
(978) 345-1018

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 1  
(617) 918-1424

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnfl/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

## OBJECTIVES

The city's long-term objective is to redevelop older industrial sites in the area along the Nashua River targeted by the city's Urban Renewal Plan. The Pilot will complete three specific activities that will help Fitchburg meet its objective. One will be to perform Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments at the 26 Willow Street and 49 Snow Street properties. If necessary, a Phase III environmental site assessment will be conducted at 26 Willow Street. The Pilot also plans to conduct Phase I environmental site assessments at three additional properties adjacent to the Nashua River, in the area of the proposed urban park. Finally, public meetings and newsletters are planned to inform affected communities and solicit public input on the Pilot.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting Phase I environmental site assessments at five properties, three of which will proceed to Phase II environmental site assessments;
- Conducting a Phase III environmental site assessment at the 26 Willow Street property, if necessary; and
- Informing the community of the brownfields work and soliciting input from residents and other stakeholders.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*